

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 9, 2004

The Honorable Michael O. Leavitt
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Leavitt:

We are writing to express our concern about the continuing delays in finalizing the designation of the Central Long Island Sound dredged material disposal site.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process has already dragged on long beyond original estimates, leading to the suspension of operations at the Central Long Island Sound disposal site and resulting in costly delays of dredging projects crucial for maintaining safe navigation in Long Island Sound.

We are particularly concerned that after more than five years of work, EPA no longer has a clear timeline for the completion of the designation. It is imperative your agency have a plan in place to complete the rulemaking before the beginning of the next dredging season to limit the ongoing impact of the closure on the region's maritime industry.

As more and more sediment accumulates, delaying action on these important dredging projects ultimately increases their costs, forces more goods to be transported by truck with negative consequences for the environment and seriously endangers the safety of commercial and recreational boaters.

Years of effort by the Environmental Protection Agency, Corps of Engineers and others have produced a comprehensive, exhaustive Environmental Impact Statement for which we commend you. Public participation has been extensive, and the issues raised have been thoroughly addressed. It is clear attempts to delay the process further do not serve the public interest.

We urge you to proceed expeditiously to finalize the designation of the Central Long Island Sound disposal site.

Sincerely,


Joseph Lieberman
U.S. Senator



Christopher Shays
Member of Congress


Christopher Dodd
U.S. Senator

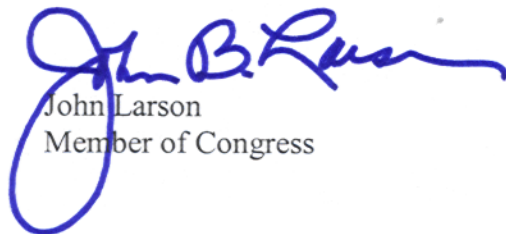

Rob Simmons
Member of Congress



Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress



Nancy Johnson
Member of Congress



John Larson
Member of Congress

cc: R. Varney, Regional Administrator, EPA Region 1
J. Kenny, Regional Administrator, EPA Region 2